

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In response to the Office Action mailed January 24, 2006, the Examiner's claim rejections have been considered. Applicants respectfully traverse all rejections regarding all pending claims and earnestly solicit allowance of these claims.

1. 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Rejections: Claims 1-14, 17-22, 25-31, 33-35, 37-42 and 44-46

The Examiner rejected claims 1-14, 17-22, 25-31, 33-35, 37-42 and 44-46 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wilms in view of Congello, Jr. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. For the sake of brevity, the rejections of independent claims 1, 20, 33, and 41 are discussed in detail on the understanding that the dependent claims are also patentably distinct over the prior art, as they depend directly from their respective independent claims. Nevertheless, the dependent claims include additional features that, in combination with those of the independent claims, provide further, separate and independent bases for patentability.

Applicants respectfully submit that neither Wilms nor Congello, either alone or in combination, teach, suggest, or disclose a gaming device that allows a player to add value to the gaming device via a voucher and to allow game play using full and partial credits. A voucher is defined in the present application as a portable ticket, coupon, memory storage device, or other instrument that is adapted to carry information that may be used to derive monetary value or credits. By allowing a player to play a game with full and partial credits, the claimed invention allows a player to use all the credit available on a voucher and eliminates the need for vouchers having non-standard wagering denominations to be issued as change.

In sharp contrast, neither the Wilms nor the Congello teaches, discloses, or suggests that a voucher may be used to add credit to a gaming device. Wilms teaches that the gaming machine uses coins, currency, or markers. Wilms defines "markers" as tokens having denominations written on them (i.e., chips). (See Col. 5, lines 7-11). Congello merely discloses that monetary currency, especially coins, is used to purchase fractional denomination lottery tickets. Congello does not teach or suggest that vouchers may be used to purchase fractional tickets. Because Wilms and Congello fail to disclose the use of vouchers to add value to a gaming machine, Applicants respectfully submit that the claimed invention is patentably distinct over the cited references. Accordingly, Applicants request allowance of these claims.

2. 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Rejections: Claims 15-16, 23-24, 36, and 43

The Examiner rejected claims 15-16, 23-24, 36, and 43 over Wilms and Congello, Jr. in further view of Skratulia. Applicants note that claims 15-16, 23-24, 36, and 43 are dependent claims that depend from independent claims 1, 20, 33, and 41, respectively. In light of the arguments submitted in Section 1 of this response, Applicants respectfully submit that dependent claims 15-16, 23-24, 36, and 43 are not obvious in view of the combination of Wilms, Congello, Jr. and Skratulia because these references, alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest all the claimed limitations. Moreover, these dependent claims further recite and define the claimed invention, and thus, are independently patentable. In conclusion, Applicants respectfully submit that the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claims 15-16, 23-24, 36, and 43 have been overcome.

CONCLUSION

Applicants have made an earnest and *bona fide* effort to clarify the issues before the Examiner and to place this case in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of all of claims 1, 3-20, 23-31, 33-37, 39-41, and 43-46 is believed to be in order, and a timely Notice of Allowance to this effect is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional required fees from Deposit Account No. 502811, Deposit Account Name BROWN RAYSMAN MILLSTEIN FELDER & STEINER LLP.

Should the Examiner have any questions concerning the foregoing, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney at (310) 712-8300. The undersigned attorney can normally be reached Monday through Friday from about 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM Pacific Time.

Respectfully submitted,

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